

## Jake's Exam Advice:

Your goal as an examinee is to convince the examiner of your understanding of the content. How do you do this?

1. Understand the content
  - Evaluate how well you understand each bit of the course
  - Make a plan to cover everything you need to know
  - Work on your weaknesses – working on your strengths feels much easier but will add far less
2. Communicating your understanding
  - Give reasons when you use equations, approximations, and steps of reasoning
  - Write a plan for how you'll tackle the question before you do it
  - Write legibly (you may need to work on your handwriting!) and lay out your page logically, using diagrams wherever helpful
3. Make a good attempt at every question you need to
  - Know your calculator properly – you could save 15 minutes of exam time! It can do equation solving, SI prefixes (kilo, mega, giga), scientific constants, complex numbers, derivative and integral approximations, summations, and has other neat time-saving tricks such as Table mode and the CALC button
  - Know your data books (and your notes for open book exams like this year's) – build up a mental map of your data books (and notes) to minimise wasted time when referring to them
  - Practice time management techniques
  - Know when to stop trying and move on from a question, but mark it to come back to if you have time (fold a corner down or put a sticky note on it)
  - Spend the first 10 minutes reading the questions, assessing the best way to approach them, and jotting down a plan for your solution path
  - Reserve the last 10 minutes for checking that you've got sensible results (correct dimensions, not breaking the laws of physics) and that you've given enough explanation

## Abhi's Exam Advice:

### 1. Organisation:

- a. Spreadsheet for lecture handouts/tripos questions so you know what you need/want to revise
- b. Daily/weekly to-do lists of what in terms of revision you want to do that week to balance with termtime work
- c. Make use of the holidays – have a big break but also try and make content exam-ready as not enough time just before the exams
- d. Set reasonable goals and work consistently – don't want to burn out

### 2. Revision:

- a. Make condensed notes from handouts and summaries from those
- b. Tripos questions – will help your understanding significantly but only if you're using them to understand the content and not just to churn out past papers
  - i. Emphasise the key parts of content
  - ii. Don't do them timed at first (almost certainly won't hit the time limit on a lot of qs without the adrenaline and won't learn as much)
  - iii. Don't be disheartened if you can't do a question at first/timed/without notes
  - iv. Not really a set formula to answer questions so use to understand the content
- c. Look over examples papers for sections you struggled with the most
- d. Make sure you know where everything is in the databook/notes
- e. Ask supervisors if you don't understand part of a tripos question/examples paper q – most will be willing to help
- f. Timers/Pomodoro Technique/Splitting up work into chunks – all useful for managing revision

### 3. Exam-Time!!!!

- a. Very time-pressured so very intense – make sure you have everything you need laid out in front/beside/on the floor (databooks/extra pens/extra paper)
- b. Layout:
  - i. Big, clear diagrams are crucial (very useful for most questions) and will help
  - ii. Layout work logically both for you to check/correct and for the examiner to follow and don't cram everything into a small space
  - iii. Use a new page per question
- c. Exam Panic:
  - i. Might get overwhelmed and be unable to think – best thing in that circumstance is to take a one or two minute water break and breathe deeply to calm down and refocus